Teaching English Language Arts to Francophone Students

Grades 3 to 9

A Guide to Transfers and Interference

Alberta
LEARNING
Direction de l'éducation française

103-07555/

Teaching English Language Arts
to Francophone Students

Grades 3 to 9

A Guide to Transfers and Interference

ALBERTA LEARNING CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION DATA

Alberta. Alberta Learning. French Language Services Branch.

Teaching English language arts to francophone students, grades 3 to 9 : a guide to transfers and interference.

ISBN 0-7785-1300-9

1. English language -- Study and teaching -- Alberta -- Foreign speakers.
2. English language -- Study and teaching as a second language -- Alberta -- Foreign speakers. I. Titre.

PE1128.A2.A333 2001 372.6521

This publication is for:

Students	
Teachers	✓
Administrators (principals, superintendents)	
Parents	
General Public	
Others	

Copyright © 2001, the Crown in Right of Alberta, as represented by the Minister of Learning. Alberta Learning, French Language Services Branch, 11160 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5K 0L2 (Phone: [780] 427-2940; Fax: [780] 422-1947). All rights reserved. Additional copies may be obtained from the Learning Resources Centre, 12360 - 142 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5L 4X9 (Phone: [780] 427-2767; Fax: [780] 422-9750).

Permission is given by the copyright owner to reproduce this document for educational purposes and on a non-profit basis.

Contents

Introduction 1

- Purpose of Document 1
- Areas of Transfer and Interference 1
- Organization of Document 2

List of Points of Interference and Transfer Between French and English 3

Appendices 45

- Appendix A – Tag Word Strategies 46
- Appendix B – Silent "e" Lesson 47
- Appendix C – Spelling Strategy 51
- Appendix D – Proofreading Strategy 52

Introduction

A Guide to Tranfers and Interference is the second in a three-part collection entitled *Teaching English Language Arts to Francophone Students (Grades 3 to 9)* that consists of the following:

- *Bridging the Français and English Language Arts (ELA) Programs of Study;*
- *A Guide to Tranfers and Interference*; and
- *Teaching English to Francophone Students: Pedagogical Considerations.*

Alberta Learning has developed this collection specifically for individuals, namely teachers, involved with English language teaching to francophone students. ELA teachers are the bridge between francophone students' established French language skills and their formal English language learning experiences. It follows that francophone students' growth as English language learners is greatly influenced by the pedagogical decisions of the ELA teacher. ELA teachers must ensure that francophone students build upon their established French language skills when learning English. The documents in this collection are designed to support teachers in doing this by:

- showing the strong correlation that exists between learning outcomes outlined in the Français and ELA programs of study;
- presenting ways to help students make the most of the opportunities to transfer their skills, while minimizing the interference that is bound to occur; and
- providing a new perspective on teaching English language arts, a perspective that takes into account the aspirations of the language community of francophone students and current knowledge regarding how language is learned in an environment where English is the dominant language.

Purpose of Document

A Guide to Transfers and Interference provides an extensive but not conclusive list of points of transfer and interference between the French and English languages. It is designed for ELA teachers of francophone students to:

- understand that in some cases, French language skills can be usefully transferred to English but in others, they result in interference errors;
- identify where French language skills can be usefully transferred to learning English, and where generalizing French language skills to English interferes with proper English usage;
- identify occurrences of transfer and interference typical of a francophone student learning English; and
- provide strategies to help students minimize interference errors and maximize appropriate transfer of French language skills to English language learning.

Areas of Transfer and Interference

As students are required to explore, construct and communicate in English, they rely on their wealth of knowledge about language and language learning gleaned from their formal and informal experiences in French. Students filter their language needs in English, for example, writing a word or understanding narrative structure, through their bank of established French language skills, transferring that knowledge

from French to English to successfully complete the task at hand. Due to the high degree of similarity of the French and English languages, much of francophone students' knowledge, skills and attitudes transfer directly from French to English. It is not unusual for some students who start reading and writing in English before formal ELA instruction to begin transferring skills spontaneously. Other students do so more gradually with the encouragement and expertise of the ELA teacher. This transfer of corresponding French language skills eases English language learning and forms an important component of English language instruction in the francophone program.

But some elements of French and English are language specific. For example, apostrophes designate possessive nouns only in English. As a result, francophone students are likely to make such errors as omitting the apostrophe in a possessive noun or designating possession within the structure of a sentence (e.g. "The bicycle of my sister is red."). Like transfers, these errors reflect the students' attempts to filter English tasks through their bank of knowledge and skills in French. In these cases though, they incorrectly apply French construction to English learning. However, interference errors are predictable and occur where there is inconsistency between the French and English languages. Making students aware of the possibility of interference, the source or sources of specific errors, and strategies to correct them will help reduce interference errors. While using specific points of interference as the foundation for isolated drills may be tempting, applying language-appropriate structures is generally best accomplished by providing students with context-embedded language learning activities. Eventually, students will use language-appropriate structures in both English and French.

Organization of Document

Apart from this brief introduction, this document consists of a chart, providing a fairly detailed list of points of interference and transfer between French and English and appendices on strategies. The chart, in turn, consists of two columns:

1. The first column identifies the language concept that may result in interference, e.g. "Q". It also illustrates how the interference may show itself in the student's language skills, e.g. quit → kwit (S). The symbols used in this column are (P) for "pronunciation," (S) for "sound," and → for "written as" or "pronounced as."

2. The second column presents three types of information:

   The **Problem** offers an explanation of what the student is doing incorrectly (e.g. students write "kw" instead of "qu").

   The **Source** offers an explanation of how the students' knowledge of French produce this error (e.g. the letter/sound relationship of "qu" as in "quite" exists in few words in French, *quoi*, *pourquoi*). Students spell words containing "qu" as they sound in English.

   The **Strategy** suggests how to correct the interference (e.g. tell students that the letter combination "kw" does not exist in English). Use *quoi* and *pourquoi* as tag words. See Appendix A for the tag word strategy.

   The second column also provides information on points of transfer (e.g. the letter "b" produces the same sound in French and English [e.g. *bonbon* – baby]).

List of Points of Interference and Transfer Between French and English

CONSONANTS

B

Interference	Explanation/Strategy
but → put (S)	The letter "b" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *bonbon*, *bain*, *bravo*, *bébé*, *belle*). **Problem:** Students write "p" instead of "b". **(Grade 3)** **Source:** The "b" and "p" sounds are similar in both languages. Students use "b" and "p" interchangeably until they learn to differentiate between the two. **Strategy:** 1. Provide students with opportunities to see English words containing "b" and "p" in context using story books, recipes, letters from friends, cereal boxes, flyers, catalogues, etc. 2. Highlight letter-sound relationships by using alliterations with words beginning with "b" or "p". For example: Peter Piper picked a pack of pickled peppers. Brad and Beth ate bread and butter for breakfast. 3. Illustrate letter-sound relationships by using familiar words such as students' names. For example: "B" has the sound as in *Bernard*. "P" has the sound as in *Paul*. Use *bébé* and *papa* as tag words (see Appendix A).
lamb → lam (S)	**Problem:** Students omit the silent "b". **(Grades 3 to 6)** **Source:** At the beginning of formal ELA instruction, students apply their knowledge of French letter-sound relationships, letter combinations and word patterns to spelling words in English. The silent "b" does not exist in French, therefore students are unfamiliar with the "**CVmb**" (e.g. comb) and "**CCVmb**" (e.g. climb) word patterns. They omit the silent "b" and spell the word as it sounds.

Strategy:

1. Target words containing a silent "b" as interferences. Provide opportunities for students to see silent "b" words in context.

2. Familiarize students with the silent "b" word pattern by highlighting silent "b" words in texts.

3. Provide students with a list of words containing silent "b". Have students write a paragraph using all the words in the silent "b" word list, write sentences using as many list words as they can, or if needed complete cloze activities with these words.

Word List: comb, lamb, dumb, plumber, climb, crumb

C

The letter "c" produces the hard and soft sound in French as in English (e.g. hard: *couper*, *cabine*, *cacher*, *cadeau*, *cuisine*; soft: *ce*, *cela*, *céleri*, *cerise*, *cent*).

candy → kandy (S)
ceiling → seiling (S)

Problem: Students write "k" instead of hard "c" or "s" instead of soft "c". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Soft "c" may be represented by an "s" and hard "c" may be represented by a "k" in French as well as English.

Strategy:

1. Many words beginning with "c" are directly transferable (e.g. circle, cable) or partly transferable (e.g. *construire* – construct) from French. To help students determine whether a "c/s", or a "c/k" should be used have students:
   a) Write the French translation of the word (e.g. *cabane* → cabin). (This works especially well with beginning sounds.) If the word is transferable to English, write the letter used in French (*cabane* begins with a "c" so "cabin" is spelled with a "c".)
   b) If the word is not transferable (e.g. carpet → *tapis*, ceiling → *plafond*), have students write the word twice using the letters "c" and "s" to represent soft "c" sound, (e.g. ceiling, seiling) or "c" and "k" (e.g. carpet, karpet) to represent hard "c" sound.
   c) Encourage students to rely on their visual memory to choose the spelling that "looks" right, then verify the correct spelling with the teacher or a dictionary. (See Appendix C and Appendix D for spelling and proofreading strategies.)
   Note: *Encourage students to rely on their visual memory. Often students choose the correct spelling of a word from a list but are unable to produce the correct spelling of the word independently.*

2. Show how the letter "k" is rarely used to represent the hard "c" sound when followed by an "l", "r" or a "y". E.g. "cl" never "kl" (clown, cloud, clasp, clip); "cr" never " kr" (cry, crisp, crave, crow).

The letter "c" produces the soft "c" sound only when followed by the letters "e", "i" and "y" (e.g. centre, cent, certain, ceremony, cereal, circle, cygnet).

music → musique (S)

Problem: Students write "ique" instead of "ic". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students use "ique" because it produces the same sound in French as "ic" in English (e.g. *magique*, *tragique*, *historique*). Many words ending in "ique" are transferable to English except that the "ic" ending is used instead of "ique".

Strategy: Tell students that most words ending in "ique" in French are transferable to English except that the "ique" ending is dropped and "ic" is used and the accent is not applied.

Word List: magic, tragic, electric, eccentric, politic, music, dramatic, energetic

D

The letter "d" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *doux*, *danser*, *donner*, *début*, *demander*), however it is not always used in the same way.

ledge → lege (S)
judge → juge (S)

Problem: Students omit the "d" when spelling words containing the "dg" letter combination. **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: The "Vdge" letter combination (e.g. edge) does not exist in French. Students apply the "Vge" letter combination from French because it produces approximately the same sound as "Vdge" (judge – *juge*, ledge – *léger*) and is a more familiar word pattern. The silent "e" does not have the same function in French as in English. Students may not realize that the "Vowel/Consonant/silent 'e'" combination (e.g. *juge*) produces a long sound in the vowel in English (e.g. huge). See Appendix B.

Strategy:

1. Familiarize students with the word pattern "dge" by providing them with opportunities to see and use "dge" words in context.

2. Illustrate the function of the silent "e" in English. Two consonants between a vowel and a silent "e" often prevent the vowel from producing a long vowel sound or "saying its name" (e.g. the "u" in "judge" is short only if the "d" is present). One consonant between a vowel and a silent "e" often produces a long sound or makes the vowel "say its name" (e.g. cake, cute, like, bake). Although the "d" in the "dg" letter combination is silent, it has the important function of producing the short sound in the vowel before it. The word "judge", therefore, could not be spelled "juge" in English because the "u" would produce a long sound as in "huge".

Word List: budge, judge, fudge, ledge, bridge, knowledge, nudge, ridge, lodge, hodgepodge, pledge, wedge

during → juring (S)

Problem: Students write "j" instead of "d". **(Grade 3)**

Source: In English, a "d" followed by a "u" can be pronounced "dj" (e.g. duo, duplicate). The "j" in English produces a similar sound so students write "j".

Strategy:

1. Explain how words can be transferred from French to English (e.g. *dupe* – dupe, *duplex* – duplex).

2. Introduce the concept of word families and draw comparisons between word families that appear in both languages. Many French and English words come from the same word family. Words from the same word family use similar spelling (e.g. the "d" in the following pairs: *durant* – during, *doute* – dubious, *deux* – duo). The word "during" is derived from the same word family as *durant* in French, therefore it begins with a "d".

   French Word List: *durabilité*, *durable*, *dur*, *durer*, *dureté*, *endurer*, *endurance*, *durée*
   English Word List: durability, duration, duress, during, endure, durable, endurance

F

The letter "f" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *fenêtre*, *faim*, *faire*, *famille*, *fête*).

G

The letter "g" produces the same hard sound in French and English (e.g. *gâter*, *glisser*, *gomme*, *grand*, *gros*) and the same soft sound when "g" is followed by the letter "e" (e.g. *gens*, *gentil*, *Georges*).

(Grade 3)
PRONUNCIATION

G → J (P)

French Word List: *geste*, *giraffe*, *gigue* (pronounced dj); *gant*, *garage*, *garde*, *gorille*, *gorge*, *guimauve*, *guide* (pronounced hard "g");

jambon pronounced "j"

English Word List: (hard "g" is followed by u, o, a, jam pronounced dj and occasionally "i". (e.g. guest, gone, game, gig)

Implications: Students should be able to transfer the hard "g" sound in pronunciation and spelling, but they will need to learn to differentiate between the soft sound produced by "j" and "g" in English and French.

gest → jest (S)

Problem: Students pronounce the letter "g" as "j". **(Grade 3)**

Source: The pronunciation of the letter "g" in English is close to that of the letter "j" in French.

Strategy:

1. Target the names of the alphabet for instruction using the "ABC" song or alphabet books in English.

2. Tell students that the names (and sounds) of the letters "g" and "j" are reversed in French and English.

Problem: Students write "g" instead of "j". **(Grade 3)**

Source: The sounds of "j" (e.g. *juin*) and soft "g" (e.g. *gérant*) in French are similar to the soft "g" sound in English (e.g. gentle). Students use "j" and "g" interchangeably to represent the soft "g" sound in English. When they choose "g", they effect a positive transfer. When they use "j", it is an interference.

Strategy:

1. See C (differentiating soft "c" and "s", hard "c" and "k").

2. Tell the students that the majority of words that begin with soft "g" in English come from the same word family as French; provide examples. Students should use the same letter they use in French (e.g. *gelée* – gel, *genre* – gender, *général* – general, *généreux* – generous, *génie* – genius, *geste* – gesture).

Use the following chart to help clarify the different errors associated with the letter "g".

ghost → gost (S)

Problem: Students omit the "h" when writing words containing the "gh" letter combination pronounced with the hard g sound. **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: The "gh" letter combination at the beginning of a word is rare in French (e.g. *ghetto*, *Ghana*) and infrequently used in English. The "h" is silent, therefore the students leave it out.

Strategy:

1. Provide students with opportunities to see and write "gh" words in the context of stories, etc.

2. Many "gh" words integrate well with a Hallowe'en theme. Provide students with a list of "gh" words and have them write a story, invitation, letter, etc., containing all or most of the words.

Word List: aghast, ghastly, ghetto, ghost, ghoul, ghost town

enough → enuf (S)

Problem: Students write "f" instead of "gh". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: The "gh" letter combination does not produce the sound of "f" in French. Students do not have a reference for this letter combination so they spell words as they sound.

Strategy: Provide students with the word list below. They may then write a story, paragraph or journal entry containing these words.

Word List: enough, rough, tough, laugh, cough

night → nite (S)
caught → cot (S)
bought → bot (S)
high → hi
though → tho

Problem: Students write "ite" instead of "ight". **(Grades 3 to 9)**
Students write "ot" instead of "aught".
Students write "ot" instead of "ought".

Source: The silent "gh" letter combination does not exist in French. Students write words containing the silent "gh" as they sound.

Strategy:

1. Familiarize students with the "ight", "igh", "aught", "ought", and "ough" word patterns by providing opportunities for students to see these words in context.

2. Illustrate the different sounds of the "ough" letter combination as in "tough", "though", "thought", "slough".

3. Provide students with a word list of "ight", "igh", "aught", "ought" or "ough" words. They may write rhyming couplets, limericks, etc. with these word patterns as rhyming words. For example: It happened one night, When the moon was bright.

Word List:

aught	**eigh**	**eight**	**igh**	**ight**	**ough**	**ought**
caught	neigh	eight	high	bright	bough	bought
taught	sleigh	weight	sigh	delight	dough	fought
fraught	weigh	reight		fight	sought	
	neighbor	height		fright	slough	thought
		straight		light	though	
				might		
				night		
				plight		
				right		
				sight		
				tight		

bright → brigth (S)
length → lenght (S)
(P)

Problem: Students write "gth" instead of "ght" and vice versa. **(Grade 3 and up)**

Source: The letter combinations "gth" and "ght" do not exist in French. Students are unfamiliar with these word patterns so they attempt to spell the words as they sound. The "th" sound as in "length" does not exist in French. Students mispronounce words ending in "gth" (length → lengt) (p) by substituting a "t" sound for "th". They then spell the word with the letter combination "ght" as if the end consonant sound was a "t".

Strategy:

1. Provide opportunities for students to see words containing the letter combinations "ght" and "gth" in context.

2. Demonstrate the correct pronunciation of the "th" sound at the end of a word in English.

3. If the word ends in the sound of "t" as in "fright" apply the "ght" letter combination. *If the word ends in the sound of "th" as in "length" apply the "gth" letter combination.*

Word List: length, strength

foreign → foren
feign → fane

Problem: Students write "en" instead of "eign". **(Grades 3 to 6)**
Students write "ane" instead of "feign".

Source: The letter combination "eign" does not exist in French. The letter combination "ign" does exist in French, however it produces the sound as in *signe* so students are unlikely to use it to represent the "en" sound. In English, the "eign" in "feign" produces the same sound as "ane". In English, the "eign" as in "foreign" produces the same sound as in "en".

Strategy:

1. Write the "ig" in "foreign", "reign" and "feign" using a coloured pencil to indicate the letters "ig".

2. Frame an outline of the word to create a visual image of the shape of words containing "eign".

H

his → is (S) (P)

Problem: Students omit the "h" when spelling words beginning with the letter "h". **(Grades 3 to 6)**
Students do not pronounce the "h" in words beginning with the letter "h" (e.g. hotel, humour). **(Grade 3)**

Source: Students do not use the letter "h" because the letter "h" is not pronounced in French [e.g. *hôtel* → ôtel (P)] and the sound produced by the "h" in English does not exist in French. Students may mispronounce words containing "h" and then misspell the word based on the mispronunciation.

Strategy:

1. Promote PROPER PRONUNCIATION of words containing "h" by demonstrating the sound produced by the letter "h". Proper pronunciation is a precursor of proper spelling.

2. Tell students that the letter "h" is the happiest letter in the alphabet because it produces the laughing sound in English (e.g. "ha ha ha").

3. Associate the letter "h" with familiar words in English (e.g. Happy Birthday, Hallowe'en).

4. Although the "h" is not pronounced in French, many "h" words transfer directly from French to English in spelling and definition (e.g. *hectare*, *humble*, *harmonica*). When writing a word in English, students should think of how the word is written in French. If it requires an "h" in French, an "h" is required in English.

J

"j" → "g" (P)

Problem: Students say "g" instead of "j". **(Grade 3)**

Source: The pronunciation of the name of the letter "j" in French is similar to that of the name of letter "g" in English.

Strategy: Associate the names of the letters "j" and "g" with familiar words. Use the word "blue jay" to illustrate the name of "j" in English. Use the word "genie" to show how the name of "g" is pronounced in English.

K

The letter "k" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *kangourou*, *kilomètre*, *kiosque*, *klaxon*), but is used less frequently in French. Illustrate this by having students refer to a French/English dictionary to compare the number of words that begin with "k" in each language.

pick → pic, pik
pique (S)

Problem: Students write "k", "c" or "que" instead of "ck". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: The "ck" letter combination does not exist in French. Students use their knowledge of one syllable word patterns in French (e.g. *bec*, *lac*, *bloc*, *truc*, *troc*, *pique*, *bloque*) that use "c" and "que" to produce the "k" sound at the end of a one syllable word. Students may be writing words ending in "ck" as they sound, omitting the "c" (e.g. pik, pic).

Strategy:

1. Explain that the "k" sound at the end of one syllable words is often represented by "ck" or "ke" (e.g. pick, bike) in English, not "c" or "que" as in French.

2. When the vowel preceding the "k" sound is short, the word usually ends in "ck" (e.g. pick, stack, luck, sock, deck).

3. When the vowel preceding the "k" sound is long, the word ends in "ke" (e.g. bake, dike, yoke, duke, lake, take).

4. The one syllable word pattern of CVk is rare in English (e.g. yak).

knot → not

Problem: Students omit the "k" in words containing an initial silent "k". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: The initial silent "k" word pattern does not exist in French. Students spell these words as they sound omitting the "k".

Strategy:

1. Familiarize students with the initial silent "k" word pattern by giving them opportunities to see and use these words in context.

2. Provide students with a word list of initial silent "k" words.

3. Use mnemonic devices to help students remember which words are written with an initial silent "k". "To knit is to know the knack of knotting."

4. To emphasize the presence of the silent "k", have students write sentences with silent "k" words then read them aloud to the class pronouncing the "k".

5. Have students write sentences using as many silent "k" words as they can (e.g. While knocking with his knuckle, the kneeling knight unknowingly knifed the doorknob.)

Word List: knee, knife, knob, know, kneel, knight, knock, knuckle, knew, knit, knot

L

The letter "l" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *lancer*, *lait*, *lapin*, *loup*, *lunettes*).

talk → tak (S)
could → coud (S)

Problem: Students omit the silent "l". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: The silent "l" in the "lm", "ld" and "lk" word patterns does not exist in French. Students spell words containing this word pattern as they sound omitting the silent "l".

Strategy:

1. Familiarize students with the silent "l" word pattern by giving them opportunities to see and use silent "l" words in context.

2. Demonstrate how omitting the silent "l" in some words changes the sound of the vowel (e.g. "calm" written without an "l" would be pronounced "cam" as in *camper)*.

Word List: walk, talk, balm, chalk, psalm, calm, could, should, would

M

The letter "m" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *maman*, *matin*, *mêler*, *midi*, *mois*).

N

The letter "n" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *nager*, *nuit*, *nid*, *Noël*, *nuage*).

P

The letter "p" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *papa*, *partir*, *penser*, *père*, *pilote*).

psychology → psychology (P)

Problem: Students pronounce the "p" in words beginning with the letter combination "ps". **(Grades 9 to 12)**

Source: The "ps" letter combination is directly transferable from French except that the "p" is pronounced in French and not in English. Students use the French pronunciation and pronounce the "p".

Strategy:

1. Model correct pronunciation of words beginning with "ps".

2. Explain that the initial "p" is silent in English.

Word List: psyche, psychiatry, psychic, psychology, psychosomatic, psalm, pseudo

Q

The letter combination "qu" produces the same sound, "kw", in both French and English (e.g. *quoi*, *pourquoi*, *quorum*). **(Grades 3 and 4)**

quit → kwit (S)

Problem: Students write "kw" instead of "qu".

Source: While the letter combination "qu" producing the sound as in "quite" exists in both languages, it is rarely used in French (e.g. *quoi*, *pourquoi*). Students do not spontaneously transfer it to English. Instead they spell the "qu" phonetically using "kw". Students are likely to have seen the "kw" used to represent "qu" in advertising.

Strategy:

1. Tell students that the letter-sound combination "kw" does not exist in English. Provide them with dictionaries and challenge them to find words containing the letter-sound combination "kw". **Note:** *There is at least one word in English that has kw in it, "awkward", but of course it does not have the "kw" sound.*

2. Use the words *quoi* and *pourquoi* as tag words. See Appendix A.

question → kestion (P)

Problem: Students pronounce "qu" letter combination as "k". **(Grade 3)**

Source: The combination "qu" is most often pronounced "k" in French (e.g. *qui*, *quelle*, *quitter*, *que*).

Strategy:

1. Model correct pronunciation of "qu" words in English .

2. Explain that in English "qu" is pronounced like the "qu" in *quoi*.

3. Use *quoi* as a tag word. See Appendix A.

sink → sinq (S)

Problem: Students write "q" instead of "k" at the end of a word. **(Grade 3)**

Source: Students are approximating the spelling of "ink" and "ank" words from their knowledge of the French word *cinq*.

Strategy: Demonstrate that in English, the letter "q" is always accompanied by the letter "u" (e.g. quest, quality, quad, quench, quick, quite, quit, quiet).

R

start → start (P)

Problem: Students mispronounce the "r" in English. **(Grade 3)**

Source: The sound of "r" is strong and rolled in the back of the mouth in French. The sound of "r" in English is softer.

start → stat

Problem: Students omit the letter "r". **(Grades 3 to 4)**

Source: Students do not use the "r" to represent the "r" sound in English because "r" produces a different sound in French. Students may not hear the "r" sound in English because it is obscured by the stronger consonant beside it (e.g. part), blended in with the vowel it controls (e.g. short), or too soft to recognize.

S

The letter "s" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *soleil*, *sac*, *salut*, *souper*, *sel*).

was → wuz (S)

Problem: Students write "z" instead of "s". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students model the spelling of "was" after the French word *gaz* whereas a one syllable word ending in the sound of "z" may be written with a single "z". They would not likely write "as" because the "s" is silent when ending a one syllable word in French (e.g. *pas*). The letter "s" also produces the sound of "z" in both French and English (e.g. "was" in English, *hasard* in French).

Strategy: Unlike French, one syllable words ending in the sound of "z" are not written with a single "z" in English. They are written with a double "z" (e.g. buzz) or a "ze" (e.g. size). If the consonant before it is long, it is written "ze". If the consonant before it is short, it can be written "zz" or less frequently "s".

chastise → chastize (S)

Problem: Students write "z" instead of "s". **(Grades 6 to 12)**

Source: In English, the "s" and "z" are used interchangeably in many words ending in "ise"/"ize" depending on whether North American or British spelling is applied. French words ending in "ise" are often directly transferable to English (e.g. *matérialise* → materialize, *centralise* → centralize). Students generalize this interchangeability to all words that contain "ise".

Strategy: Students should identify words containing "ize" and "ise" as possible interferences and check the correct spelling in a dictionary.

T

The letter "t" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *tableau*, *temps*, *terre*, *tête*, *tomber*).

watch → wach

Problem: Students omit the "t". **(Grades 3 and 4)**

Source: Students do not access "tch" because it is infrequently used in French, therefore students do not spontaneously transfer it to English. The sound of "tch" is also produced by "ch" in English.

Strategy: Although rarely used, the "tch" letter combination produces the same sound in French. Use "atchoum" as a tag word (see Appendix A).

Word List: catch, witch, match, butcher, fetch, watch, latch

V

The letter "v" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *vite*, *vacance*, *vendre*, *vent*, *vert*).

active → actif (S)

Problem: Students write "f" instead of "ve". **(Grade 3)**

Source: In French, an adjective ending may change from a "ve" (when modifying feminine nouns) to an "f" (when modifying masculine nouns). Although this does not apply to English, students may be applying a form of this grammatical rule when they spell words such as "active" as *actif*. Student may also be confusing the "f" with the "v" because the sounds they produce are similar in both French and English.

Strategy:

1. Explain that in English adjectives do not change spelling according to the gender of a noun. For example: The girl is active. The boy is active.

2. English words rarely end in a vowel followed by a single "f" (exception "if"). The "f" is either preceded or followed by a consonant (e.g. golf, wolf, loft, gift), doubled (e.g. stuff, cliff), or followed by an "e" (e.g. knife).

W

The "w" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *wapiti*, *water-polo*, *western*).

with → ouith (S)
water → ouatter (S)

Problem: Students write "oi" or "ou" instead of "w". **(Grade 3)**

Source: Students do not use "w" because the letter-sound relationship of "w" as in "water" is rare in French and exists in only a few words mainly related to science, sports, and leisure or borrowed directly from English (e.g. watt, week-end, water-polo). The "w" sound (as in "water") approaches the sound produced by the letter combinations "oi" or "ou" in French (e.g. *oiseau*, *oison*, *ouest*, *oui*). Students use these letter combinations instead of "w".

Strategy:

1. Familiarize students with words containing "w".

2. Use the word *wapiti* as a tag word. See Appendix A.

with → whith
where → were

Problem: Students write "wh" when a "w" is required and write "w" when "wh" is required. **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students do not use "wh" to represent the sound of "w" in English because the "wh" letter combination does not exist in French. The letter "h" in the "wh" letter combination is silent so students leave it out. Since the "wh" produces the same sound as the "w", students use them interchangeably.

Strategy:

1. Tell students that words associated with questions (e.g. what, when, where, and why) begin with "wh".

2. Provide students with opportunities to see and use words beginning with "wh" in context.

3. Provide students with words beginning with "wh" and have them put these words in sentences (e.g. Why did you whistle at the white whale?) This will assist students in entering "wh" words in their visual memory. They are then better able to determine if a "wh" or a "w" is required on a word.

Word List: white, whale, whistle, wharf, whisper, whip, whine, whipper-snapper, whirl, whip

write → rite

Problem: Students omit the silent "w". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students do not use "wr" because this letter combination does not exist in French. Students spell "wr" words as they sound omitting the silent "w".

Strategy:

1. Provide students with a list of words beginning with "wr" and have them use as many words as they can in a sentence.

2. Present "wr" words along with their homonym (e.g. wrap – rap, wring – ring, write – rite, wrote – rote) to illustrate that a misspelling of some "wr" words alters the meaning completely.

Word List: wrap, wrinkle, wrist, wreath, wring, write, wreck, wrestle, wrong, wrote, wren, wrench

X

The "x" produces the same sound in French and English (e.g. *extra*, *saxophone*, *exception*, *explorer*, *express*).

Y

The "y" produces the same consonant sound in French as English (e.g. *yo-yo*, *yacht*, *yoga*).

your → wour (S)
yet → het (S)

Problem: Students write "w" and "h" instead of "y". **(Grades 3 to 4)**

Source: The letter-sound relationship of "y" as in "you" is rare in French (e.g. *yacht*, *yaourt*, *yoga*, *yo-yo*), therefore students do

not make a spontaneous transfer of this letter-sound relationship to English. Students tend to use the consonants "w" and "h" indiscriminately for "y".

Strategy:

1. Provide students with a list of words beginning with "y" and have them write sentences with as many words as they can (e.g. The yak ate yummy yellow yogourt while yawning in the yard.)

2. Use the word *yo-yo* as a tag word. See Appendix A.

Word List: yard, yawn, yellow, yet, your, yarn, yell, yes, you, young, yummy, yucky, yak, yodel, year

silly → sillie (S)
→ sille (S)
→ silli (S)

Problem: Students write "ie", "e" and "i" instead of "y". **(Grades 3 to 4)**

Source: The long "e" sound at the end of a word is represented by an "i" (e.g. *céleri*) or "ie" (e.g. *partie*) in French. Students generalize these rules to English. Students may also write the letter they hear (e.g. "e" in English or "i" in French).

Strategy: Show that the long "e" sound at the end of two or more syllable words in English is almost always spelled with a "y" (e.g. candy, party, happy, dirty, muddy, silly, funny). Use claps to demonstrate syllables.

my → mi

Problem: Students write "i" instead of "y". **(Grade 3)**

Source: Students do not use "y" to represent the long "i" sound as in "my" because "y" does not represent the sound of long "i" in French. Early in their English language development, students learn from phrases such as "I am" that the long "i" sound is represented by an "I". They write the letter of the sound they hear.

Strategy: In English, "y" makes the sound of long "i" at the end of a

one syllable (one clap) word (e.g. try, by, fry, dry, sky). When you hear "i" at the end of a one syllable word, it is a "y". When you hear "i" inside a word with more than one syllable, it is an "i" (e.g. bilingual, biography).

Z

The letter "z" produces the same sound in English as in French (e.g. *zèbre*, *zigzag*, *zone*, *zéro*).

Interference	Explanation/Strategy
	Both long and short vowel sounds are very problematic. Few letter-sound associations transfer directly from French to English. Treat all vowels as possible interferences. **(Grade 3)**
came → cam (S) **back → backe (S)** **cousin → cousine (S)**	**Problem:** Students omit the silent "e" or apply "e" indiscriminately. **(Grades 3 to 6)**
	Source: The silent "e" at the end of a word in French does not have the same function as the silent "e" in English (e.g. *jupe*, *verte*, *brave*, *belle*, *place*). The silent "e" is used to indicate gender in French. **Note:** *The function of the silent "e" in the two languages is similar, i.e. in both languages it changes the pronunciation of the word. How it changes the pronunciation differs of course.*
	Strategy: Illustrate the function of the silent "e" in English. When the silent "e" is added after a "VC" letter combination, the vowel often usually produces a long sound. Without the silent "e", the vowel produces a short sound (e.g. car – care, kit – kite, cut – cute, quit – quite, Tom – tome, cam – came). Inform students that the silent "e" at the end of a "CVC" (e.g. cap) or "VC" (e.g. at) knocks on the vowel's door so the vowel says its name to introduce itself (e.g. cape, ate). See Appendix B.
come → comme (S)	**Problem:** Students double the consonant before the "e" in words where the first vowel is short. **(Grades 3 and 4)**
	Source: Students may be generalizing the spelling of these words from the pattern of words such as *comme* and *sommes* in French. The words "come" and "some" are exceptions to the silent "e" rule in English.
	Strategy: Present the words "come" and "some" as exceptions to the silent "e" rule.
cousin → cousine (S)	**Problem:** Students apply the silent "e" indiscriminately. **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: In French, the silent "e" is often added to indicate gender. Students may be adding an "e" to English words as well. The English pronunciation of "cousin" is actually closer to the French pronunciation *cousine* than "cousin" so students write *cousine*.

Strategy: Illustrate the function of the silent "e" in English. Explain that gender is not indicated by adding an "e" in English.

second → sécond

Problem: Students add accents to words in English. **(Grade 3)**

Source: The spelling of some words transfer directly from French to English except that the word requires an accent in French (e.g. *décide*, *élection*, *décade*, *révision*, *résumé*).

Strategy: Explain to students that English words do not require accents. Provide examples of words that transfer directly from French to English except that an accent is not required in English.

I → E (P)

Problem: Students say "e" instead of "i". **(Grade 3)**

Source: The letter "i" is pronounced "e" in French.

Strategy: Demonstrate the difference between the pronunciation of "i" in English and in French.

I

My sister and I → My sister and i

Problem: Students do not capitalize the "I" when used as a personal pronoun. **(Grade 3)**

Source: The capital "I" word pattern does not exist in French.

Strategy: Explain that "I" represents a very important word and deserves a capital.

U

put → pout (S)

Problem: Students write "ou" instead of "u". **(Grades 3 to 5)**

Source: Since the short "u" sound as in "put" does not exist in French, students may be using letters that produce approximately the same sound in French. In colloquial French, *bout* is pronounced to rhyme with "put". Students may use the "ou" to represent the short "u" sound.

Strategy: Illustrate the sound produced by "ou" in English (e.g. out, bout, pout).

fun → fon (S)
but → bat (S)

Problem: Students write "o" and "a" instead of "u". **(Grades 3 to 5)**

Source: The "u" in French does not produce the sound of "u" as in "put". The sound of "o" as in *pomme* and *téléphone* approaches the short "u" sound so students write "o". Students are unfamiliar with the letter-sound relationships of all short vowels in English.

Strategy: Illustrate the letter-sound relationships of all short vowels.

build → bild (S)

Problem: Students omit the silent "u" in words containing the "ui" letter combination. **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: The "ui" letter combination producing the short "i" sound does not exist in French. Students write words containing "ui" as they sound.

Word List: build, built, guild

suit → sout (S)
→ soot (S)

Problem: Students write "ou" or "oo" instead of "ui". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students use "ou" because these letters produce the same sound in French (*bout*, *toupie*, *ou*) as "ui" (fruit, pursuit, suit, recruit) does in English. Students may write "oo" because these letters produce the same sound as "ui" in English (e.g. moon, tool, zoo, too, boot).

R – Controlled vowels

word → werd (S)

Problem: Students spell words containing "r" – controlled vowels with the incorrect vowel. **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: The use of "r" after a vowel does not significantly change the sound of the vowel in French. Since "er" is the most common of the "r" – controlled vowels, students use it indiscriminately.

Strategy:

1. Brainstorm words containing "r" – controlled vowels. Make columns to represent the various ways in which "r" – controlled words can be represented in English (e.g. er, or, ir, ur, ar).

2. Give students opportunities to see and use "r" – controlled words in context.

3. The more often students see "r" – controlled vowels in context the more likely they are to commit them to their visual memory.

DIPHTHONGS

AU

caught → cot (S) — **See "G".**

OI

noise → noys (S)

Problem: Students write "oy" instead of "oi". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: In English, the "oy" produces the same sound as "oi" (e.g. boy). Students do not use "oi" because this letter combination produces the sound of "w" as in "walk" in French (e.g. *oiseau*).

Word List: hoist, poise, point, coin, coil, moist, soil, voice, void, oil

OO

moon → moun (S)

Problem: Students write "ou" instead of "oo". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students use "ou" as this letter combination produces a sound in French similar to that of "oo" in English (e.g. *foulard* – fool).

Word List: soon, shampoo, cool, baboon, food, mood, tool, pool, igloo

wood → woud (S)

Problem: Students write "u" instead of "oo". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students do not use "oo" because this letter combination is rare in French and does not produce the same sound as in English (e.g. *zoo*).

Word List: hoop, hoodoo, hoot

OW

now → nau (S)

Problem: Students write "au" and other letter combinations instead of "ow". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students do not use the "ow" letter combination because it does not exist in French. They use other letter combinations indiscriminately.

Word List: bow, frown, growl, fowl, cower, endow, owl, cow

OY

boy → boi (S)

Problem: Students write "oi" and other letter combinations instead of "oy". **(Grade 3)**

Source: Students do not use "oy" because the "oy" letter combination is seldom used in French (e.g. *joyeux*, *voyelle*).

Word List: joy, coy, toy, enjoy, royal, loyal, destroy

E

real → ril (P) (S)

Problem: Students write the letter "i" to represent the long "e" sound in English. **(Grade 3)**

Source: The letter "I" in French is pronounced as long "e".

Strategy: See Long-Vowel Letter Combinations

Long-Vowel Letter Combinations

Problem: Students use letter combinations for long-vowel sounds indiscriminately. **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Long-vowels combinations are perhaps the most difficult spelling patterns for francophone students to master. Students are required to learn that more than one letter is used to represent a single long-vowel sound, hence there are several patterns that represent each long-vowel sound. This is complicated by the lack of transfer of letter-sound associations from French.

Strategy:

1. Present long-vowel sounds to students as the vowel "saying its name". Teach the names of the vowels and verify that students are not confusing the names of the letters "i" and "e".

2. Present long-vowel sounds to the class and ask students to brainstorm words that contain a long-vowel sound. Reorganize combinations in groups so that students begin to form word patterns and associations for

the various long-vowel letter combinations. Explain the differences among the various combinations (e.g. The long "a" at the end of a word is often represented by "ay" and not "ai".)

3. Encourage students to rely on their visual memory to select which long-vowel letter combination to employ when writing a word. Write "say" on the board using all the long "a" letter combination possibilities (e.g. sai, say, seigh, sey). Ask students to choose the word they think is correct. Many students will choose the correct spelling from a list even though they may not be able to independently produce the correct spelling of the word. Familiarize students with all combinations that produce long-vowel sounds and encourage them to write words using all the combinations, then choose the one they think is correct relying on visual memory.

4. Present homonyms in conjunction with long-vowel combinations. Many words spelled differently reflect different meanings. Indicate homonyms when brainstorming words (Step 2). The concept of homonyms transfers directly from French (e.g. *ce – se*, *sait – c'est*).

5. Write sentences using homonym pairs to associate definition with a particular spelling of a word (e.g. "There was a sale on sailboats.", "I rode my bicycle down the road.").

Word List: they're – their – there, tail – tale, ate – eight, meat – meet, oar – ore, sail – sale, hay – hey, feet – feat, road – rode, fair – fare, pale – pail, sea – see, boar – bore, break – brake, flare – flair, steal – steel, plain – plane, bear – bare, hear – here, sew – so

a_e, ay, ai, eigh, ey, eig

Word List:

"a_e"	**"ay"**	**"ai"**	**"eigh"**	**"ey"**	**"eig"**
bake	maybe	hail	eight	they	reign
age	today	grain	freight	whey	
care	pay	repair	weigh	fey	
Jane	play	rain	weight		
shape	spray	stairs			

A

e_e, ea, ee, ie

"e_e"	**"ea"**	**"ee"**	**"ie"**
these	seat	tree	thief
mere	year	street	chief
theme	peach	teeth	field
complete	cleaner	between	movie
delete	squeak	free	fierce

E

i_e, igh, ie

"i_e"	**"igh"**	**"ie"**
fire	high	pie
invite	sigh	necktie
quite	night	dried
size	delight	spied
nine	right	flies

O

o_e, oa, ow, old, olt

"o_e"	**"oa"**	**"ow"**	**"old"**	**"olt"**
joke	goat	slow	hold	bolt
cone	toad	window	old	jolt
explore	toast	snow	bold	colt
rope	soap	slow	cold	thunderbolt
alone	coach	elbow	folder	volt

U

u_e, ew

"u_e"	**"ew"**
cure	few
June	curfew
refuse	
amuse	

SH

Interference	Explanation/Strategy
shed → ched (S)	**Problem:** Students write "ch" instead of "sh". **(Grades 3 to 4)**
	Source: Students use "ch" instead of "sh" because in French the "ch" produces the same sound as "sh" in English (e.g. *cher*, *cheval*, *chercher*, *chemise*), and the letter combination "sh" is infrequently used in French.
	Strategy: Use the French word *shampooing* as a tag word. See Appendix A.

TH

that → dat (P) **thank → tank (P)**	**Problem:** Students pronounce "th" as "d" or "t". **(Grade 3)**
	Source: The sound of "th" as in "that" and "this" does not exist in French. Students pronounce "th" as "t" because "th" is pronounced "t" in French (e.g. *thon*, *théâtre*, *thé*, *thème*). Students pronounce the "th" as "d" because the "d" sound is produced when attempting to pronounce "th" if the tongue is incorrectly placed for a "t" sound.
	Strategy: Demonstrate the proper placement of the tongue to produce the correct sound.
this → dis (S) **three → tree (S)**	**Problem:** Students write "d" instead of "th". **(Grade 3)**
	Source: (See previous source.)

Interference	Explanation/Strategy
	Most blends including "br", "bl", "cl", "dr", "pr", "sp", "st", "tr", etc. exist in French.
twenty → tounty (S) **smell → semel (S)** **skate → scate (S)** **sweet → suit (S)**	**Problem:** Students approximate spelling of blends from their knowledge of these sounds in French. **(Grades 3 to 6)** **Source:** "sk", "sl", "sm", "sn", "sw", "thr" and "tw" are rarely used in French.

Word List:

"sk"	"sl"	"sm"	"sn"	"sw"	"thr"	"tw"
skate	slide	smell	snake	swing	through	twist
skunk	slip	smile	snap	swim	three	twenty
ski	sleep	smart	snow	sweep	thrill	between
sky	slow	smell	snoop	sweet	thread	twelve
skirt	sled	smooth	snail	swift	throw	twist

school → scool (S)	**Problem:** Students write "sc" instead of "sch". **(Grades 3 to 6)** **Source:** Students use "sc" because the sound of "sch" as in "school" is produced by "sc" in French (e.g. *scolaire*). In addition, "sch" produces the sound of "sh" in French (e.g. *schéma*, *schisme*). Since the "h" is silent in "sch" in English, a student's attention is not drawn to it. **Word List:** school, scholar, schooner, scheme, schedule

ED

Interference	Explanation/Strategy
walked → walkt (S)	**Problem:** Students write "t" instead of "ed". **(Grades 3 to 4)** **Source:** The "ed" ending used to denote past tense is sometimes pronounced as "t" (e.g. walked, talked) in English. When students hear the "t" sound, they write "t". **Strategy:** Explain that with few exceptions, the past tense of a verb is formed by adding "ed".
walked → walk (S)	**Problem:** Students omit the "ed" ending on the past-tense form of some verbs. **(Grades 3 to 4)** **Source:** Students may not understand how to conjugate verbs in the past tense in English. **Strategy:** Students are familiar with the concept of conjugating verbs. Conjugate a French verb in the past tense. Point out how the infinitive changes when conjugated (e.g. *marcher → j'ai marché, tu as marché*). Draw comparisons to the conjugation of verbs in the past tense in English. Provide students with the general rule that to change most verbs from the infinitive to the past tense, add "ed" (e.g. haul → hauled).
slept → sleeped (S) (P)	**Problem:** Students write "ed" instead of "t". **(Grades 3 to 6)** **Source:** Students generalize the rule of adding "ed" to words in the past tense. Some words in English use a "t" instead of an "ed" to denote past tense. **Strategy:** Provide students with lists of exceptions to the "ed" rule. **Word List:** built, burnt, crept, dealt, felt, knelt, meant, slept, spent
happened → happend (S) **landed → landid (S)**	**Problem:** Students write "id" or "d" instead of "ed". **(Grades 3 to 4)** **Source:** In the early stages of learning English, students are unfamiliar with adding the "ed" to verbs to form the past tense. They use other letter combinations (e.g. id, d) instead.

Students write "id" because they are familiar with the word "did" and some words ending in "ed" rhyme with "did" (e.g. landed, crafted, hunted, haunted, parted). Words that do not form an additional syllable when "ed" is added sound like they require only a "d" (e.g. called, happened, frightened, brightened, bawled).

Strategy: With few exceptions, a verb in the past tense requires an "ed".

ER

letter → lettre

Problem: Students write "re" instead of "er". **(Grades 3 to 4)**

Source: Students do not use "er" because in French "er" produces the sound of long "a" as in *marcher*. The sound produced by "er" as in "letter" does not exist in French. Students may be writing the French form of the word using "re" instead of "er".

Strategy:

1. Many words ending in "re" in French transfer to English except that the "re" ending in French changes to an "er" ending in English (e.g. *lettre* – letter, *cylindre* – cylinder).

2. Illustrate the "er" sound in English using the last four months of the year.

3. Explain to students that with few exceptions, (e.g. *centre*, *massacre*, *litre*, *spectre*), the sound of "er" as in "letter" at the end of a word in English is written "er".

LE

little → littel (S)
→ littote (S)

Problem: Students write "el", "ole", etc., instead of "le". **(Grades 3 to 4)**

Source: Students do not use "le" because "le" produces a different sound in French than in English (e.g. *elle*, *faible*, *horrible*, *table*). Students write "ole" because "ole" produces the same sound in French as "le" does in English (e.g. *métropole*, *école*). In English, the sound of "l" comes after the sound of "e", so students write "el" instead of "le".

Strategy:

1. Illustrate the difference between how "le" is pronounced and how it is written in English. The vowel sound sounds as if it comes first but it is written "le".

2. Tell students that when they hear the sound of "le" as in "little" at the end of a word, write "le".

3. Many words ending in "le" are transferable in spelling and definition from French. Draw attention to the contrast in the pronunciation of "le" while drawing a comparison to the spelling of these words (e.g. *capable*, *circle*, *miracle*, *portable*, *probable*, *stable*, *table*).

ING

driving → drivigne (S) → drivign

Problem: Students write "ign" instead of "ing". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students use the "ign" spelling because it produces a sound in French that is similar "ing" in English (e.g. *signe*, *vigne*). The "ing" letter combination is rare in French and does not produce the same sound as in English (e.g. *shampooing*).

Strategy:

1. Illustrate the "ing" letter-sound relationship in English.

2. Familiarize students with this word pattern by using familiar verbs ending in "ing" (e.g. walking, talking, smiling).

3. Use the words "sing" and "sign" to illustrate the difference in pronunciation of "ign" and "ing" in English.

ISM

socialism → socialisme (S)

Problem: Students write "isme" instead of "ism".

Source: Students use "isme" because words ending in "isme" in French are transferable to English except that the final "e" is omitted (e.g. *terrorisme* → terrorism). **(Grades 9 to 12)**

Strategy: Tell students that words ending in "isme" in French can be transferred to English by omitting the final "e".

Word List: terrorism, capitalism, socialism, communism, fascism

IST

activist → activiste (S)

Problem: Students write "iste" instead of "ist". **(Grades 6 to 12)**

Source: Students use " iste" because words ending in "iste" in French are transferable to English except that the final "e" is omitted.

Strategy: Tell students that words ending in "iste" in French can be transferred to English by omitting the final "e".

TION/SION

lotion → loshun (S)
→ lochun (S)

Problem: Students write "shun" or "chun" instead of "tion" and "sion". **(Grades 3 to 6)**

Source: Students do not use "tion" or "sion" because these letter combinations produce a different sound in French. Students do not recognize the letter-sound relationship of "tion"/ "sion" in English so they write these endings as they sound (e.g. shun).

Strategy: Illustrate how many words ending in "tion" in French are directly transferable to English. Words ending in the "shun" sound in English are written using "tion" or "sion".

Word List: adhesion, admission, concession, education, lotion, motion, nation, permission, possession

CONTRACTIONS

Interference	Explanation/Strategy
didn't → dint (S) **→ did'nt (S)** **→ didnt**	**Problem:** Students spell the contraction phonetically omitting the apostrophe. **(Grades 3 to 6)** Students place the apostrophe between letters indiscriminately. Students place the apostrophe between the two words. Students write the contraction correctly omitting the apostrophe. **Source:** The concept of using an apostrophe to designate letters left out when words are combined exists in both languages (e.g. *Je t'aime*, didn't). The process of forming contractions in English is different from French. In French, the apostrophe usually represents letters omitted at the end of the first word of an elision. Students in the transition years may not have seen contractions written in English so they are writing them as they sound. Later they may use the apostrophe indiscriminately. **Strategy:** Compare and contrast a contraction and an elision. **Similarity:** • Both a contraction and an elision use apostrophes to designate letters omitted when two words are combined (e.g. is not → isn't, *Je te aime* → *Je t'aime*). • Both an "elision" and a contraction form one word out of two (e.g. *Je t'aime* not *Je t' aime*, "didn't" not "did n't"). **Difference:** • In French, the apostrophe usually designates letters omitted at the end of the first word (e.g. *l'eau*). • In English, the apostrophe designates letters left out at the beginning or middle of the second word (e.g. aren't, he's). 1. Print words that form contractions on sentence strips (e.g. can not, did not, she is). Write the contractions on the board. Have students fold back the letters that are omitted to form the contractions. They may then put the apostrophe where the fold is remembering to combine the two words into one. Then students write the contracted

words placing the apostrophe where the letters are left out on the fold of the paper.

2. Provide students with "rules" for writing contractions with "not" (place the apostrophe between the "n" and "t"), and "is" (omit the "i" and replace it with the apostrophe), etc.

3. Explain the contraction exceptions of "won't" and "can't".

4. Revisit contractions throughout grades 3 to 6.

POSSESSIVE NOUNS

Interference	Explanation/Strategy
My brother's bicycle is red. → The bicycle of my brother is red. **My brother's bicycle is red. → My brothers bicycle is red.**	**Problem:** Students designate possession within the structure of the sentence instead of using a possessive noun. **(Grade 3)** Students omit the apostrophe that designates a possessive noun. **(Grades 3 to 6)** **Source:** French designates possession by the sentence's structure (e.g. *C'est l'auto de mon père.*). Students may omit the apostrophe because in French apostrophes are only used in elisions. **Strategy:** 1. Explain the difference between the designation of possession in English and French. 2. Write sentences such as "The bike of my brother is red." Rewrite the sentence using the English structure illustrating the difference between how possession is formed in English and French. 3. Possessive nouns, especially plural possessive nouns, are very problematic for francophone students because of the difference in possessive designation in French and English.

Period (.)

Interference	Explanation/Strategy
	The function and form of most punctuation marks transfer directly from French to English. The following are instances of interference. **(Grades 3 to 6)**
16.5 → 16,5	**Problem:** Students use a comma instead of a period to designate decimals.
	Source: A comma is used to designate decimals in French. A period is used in English.

Quotation marks (“ ”)

“That’s it!” she said. → << That’s it!>> she said.	**Problem:** Students use angle brackets, << >>, instead of quotation marks, “ ”, to indicate dialogue.
	Source: Quotation marks have the same function but not the same form in French as in English.

Colon (:)

Dear Mr. Smith: → Dear Mr. Smith,	**Problem:** Students use a comma instead of a colon to punctuate a business letter salutation.
	Source: The greeting of a business letter in French requires a comma, not a colon.

Hyphen (-)

baseball → base-ball	**Problem:** Students use a hyphen where none is required.
	Source: Some words transfer directly from French except that a hyphen is required in French and not in English.
Mary Beth → Mary-Beth	**Problem:** Students use a hyphen between compound names.
	Source: Compound names require a hyphen in French.

– What's that?

Problem: Students use a hyphen or dash to designate a change of speaker.

Source: A change of speaker is designated by a hyphen in French only. A new paragraph is used in English instead of a hyphen to designate a change of speaker.

Apostrophe (')

The cat's tail → the cats tail

Problem: Students omit the apostrophe in possessive nouns.

Source: The apostrophe is not used to designate possessive nouns in French.

DOUBLE LETTERS

Interference	Explanation/Strategy

Consonants may be doubled in both French and English.

account → acount

Problem: Students do not double the consonant when it is required or double it when it is not. **(Grades 3 to 12)**

Source: Many words requiring double letters transfer directly from French to English (e.g. *attribuer* – attribute, *attacher* – attach). Students generalize this to all words. This creates interference because some words require a double letter in French and not in English (e.g. *littérature* – literature) and some words do not require a double letter in French but do in English (e.g. *mariage* – marriage).

Strategy:

1. In English, double letters often produce a short sound in the vowel preceding them, e.g. title (long i), little (short i), cutting (short u), cutest (long u).

2. Target words that are possible interferences.

Word List:

French	English
adresse	address
mariage	marriage
réceptionniste	receptionist
enveloppe	envelope
appartement	apartment
développement	development
littérature	literature
personnification	personification
bagage	baggage

FIGURES OF SPEECH

Interference	Explanation/Strategy

The concept and function of figures of speech are the same in French and English. The spelling of the names of the figures of speech is the same or similar in French and English.

simile → comparaison

Problem: The "simile" is referred to as a *comparaison* in French. **(Grades 9 to 12)**

Source: The name for simile in French is *comparaison*. Students may not make the transfer of the concept of comparison to English because they may not realize that the "simile" is in fact the same thing as a *comparaison*.

Word List:

French	English
métaphore	metaphor
personnification	personification
comparaison	simile
hyperbole	hyperbole
allégorie	allegory
allitération	alliteration

Strategy:

1. When introducing the figures of speech to students, determine first what they know about these concepts in French.
2. To encourage transfer, use the French names of the parts of speech and compare them to the name in English.
3. Illustrate how the concepts are the same.
4. Point out that *comparaison* is referred to as "simile" in English. Also explain that "simile" resembles *similaire* in French, which means alike.

Prepositions

Interference	Explanation/Strategy
	The concept and function of the parts of speech is similar in French and English. The spelling of the names of the parts of speech is often similar (e.g. verb – *verbe*, pronoun – *pronom*) and sometimes identical (e.g. article). **(Grades 3 to 9)**
We went to school. → We went at school.	**Problem:** Students use the incorrect preposition.
	Source: Students translate sentences directly from French to English; they use the wrong preposition because many prepositions are language specific.
	Strategy: Target some of the most common preposition usage errors. We went to school. → We went at school. I put my boots on. → I put my boots. I left for school. → I left to school.
	Correct preposition usage is an ongoing challenge and very difficult for francophone students to master.

Plurals

Nouns are designated as plural in French and English.
An "s" is used to designate plural in French and English.

dogs → dog (P) (S)

Problem: Students do not pronounce the "s" that designates a plural noun. Students do not write the "s" to designate a plural noun.

Source: The "s" in plural nouns is not pronounced in French so students do not pronounce it in English. Students may omit the "s" as a result of not pronouncing it. The plural of most French and English nouns is designated by adding an "s". Words ending in "x", "s", "c", "sh", "z", "y", "o" and "f" are exceptions in English and should be targeted as areas of interference. Irregular plurals (e.g. mouse, ox), especially those words that only have one form (e.g. deer, sheep, moose) should be targeted as an area of interference.

Abbreviation

The abbreviation is used to shorten words in both English and French. **(Grades 3 to 9)**

Mr. → Mr
Dr. → Dr
Ms. → Ms

Problem: Students omit the period in abbreviations.

Source: The abbreviation always has a period in English, whereas in French, this rule varies.

Note: Only medical doctors are given the designation of Dr in French. In English, both medical doctors and individuals who hold doctorate degrees are designated with the title Dr. In French, a Ph.D. is designated by putting "Ph. D." after the person's name.

Capital letters

The concept and use of capital letters is an area of transfer from French to English except: **(Grades 3 to 12)**

Monday → monday
October → october

The days of the week and the month of the year require a capital in English only.

New Year's Day → New Year's day

Generic nouns in a holiday do not require a capital letter in French.

French → french

The name of a language does not require a capital letter in French.

Atlantic Ocean → Atlantic ocean

Generic nouns in a geographic name or address do not require a capital in French.

Minister of Education → minister of Education

Generic names of public and private organizations, institutions and societies do not require capitals in French. In fact, many English style manuals now recommend lower case in many uses of titles.

Charlotte's Web → Charlottes' web

In French, the first word or the first article and noun require a capital. In English, each important word in a title is capitalized.

Accents

celery → célery

Problem: Students apply accents to words in English. **(Grade 3)**

Source: Many word spellings transfer directly or partially from French except that the accent is omitted in English.

Strategy: Tell students to omit the accent when transferring spelling from French to English.

Date

→ the 27 January 1999

Problem: Students use the word "the" when writing the date. **(Grade 3)**

Source: Students transfer the structure of writing the date directly from French whereas the article *le* (the) is included.

Dollar sign

The symbol for the dollar sign is the same in English and French. **(Grades 3 to 6)**

$ 48 → 48 $

Problem: Students place the dollar sign after the numeral.

Source: The dollar sign is placed before the numeral in English and after the numeral in French.

Word usage/Sentence structure

Errors occur when students attempt to translate words and phrases from French to English. The following are some common errors in word usage and sentence structure. **(Grades 3 to 9)**

What time is it? → What hour is it?
I like to skate. → Me, I like to skate.
Do you have the time? → Do you have the hour?
Monique and I went to the pool. → Monique and me, we went to the pool.
My brother's bicycle is red. → The bicycle of my brother is red.
If I had seen my friend, I would have waved. → If I would have seen my friend, I would have waved.
I put on my boots. → I put my boots.
I must do my homework. → I must do my homeworks.
Leave me alone. → Let me alone.
I am wasting my time. → I am losing my time.
What are your hours of operation? → What are your hours of opening?
We live in Edmonton. → We live at Edmonton.
I am going to school. → I am going at school.

Idiomatic expressions

"As red as a beet" → "As red as a tomato"

Idioms are expressions peculiar to a language. Idioms are familiar, widely used and easily understood for a native language speaker. They are deeply rooted in the culture and history of a language. Attempts to translate idiomatic expressions literally from French to English, or vice versa often result in confusion and sometimes in great hilarity. **(Grades 3 to 12)**

"You are out in left field." → "You are in the potatoes."

The English language has a vast repertoire of idiomatic expressions. Exposing students to the richness of this language form is important and fun.

"It was as easy as pie." → "It was simple like hello."

Brainstorm common idiomatic expressions in French and provide students with the English "equivalent". Students may illustrate the English idioms by creating pictures that express their literal meaning. For example, illustrate the literal meaning of the idiomatic expression "all thumbs" by drawing a hand with "all thumbs".

Some fun ones to try include:

- raining cats and dogs
- to step on someone's toes
- birds of a feather stick together
- to sleep like a log
- from the frying pan into the fire
- playing with fire
- cool as a cucumber

Appendices

Tag Word Strategy

Positive transfer of a student's knowledge of French to English language learning is not always automatic. The ELA teacher plays an important role in eliciting and ensuring that the full range of language transfer potential is maximized. The "tag word" strategy can assist with this.

A tag word is a familiar French word or concept that students may use to initiate positive transfer from French to English language learning. For example, when faced with the task of writing a word containing the "qu" sound as in "queen", students do not automatically use "qu". They often write "kw" instead because, in French, the "qu" more commonly produces the sound of "k" as in *qui*, and only infrequently produces the sound as in "queen" (e.g. *quoi*, *pourquoi*).

1. Illustrate the letter-sound relationship of "qu" as in "queen" by writing the words *quoi* and *pourquoi* on the board.

2. Tell students that these words are tag words. Whenever they must write an English word containing the sound of "qu", they should think of the two tag words in French and write "qu".

3. When correcting students' writing, prompt them to use the words *quoi* and *pourquoi* as models of the sound that the "qu" produces in English.

Silent "e" Lesson

Activity time: 2-3 classes
Grade level: 3 and 4

Concept taught: Function of the silent "e" in English

Prerequisites: Names of alphabet in English, basic knowledge of short vowel sounds and CVC words, vowels and consonants

At the outset of formal English language learning, francophone students often add "e" indiscriminately to the end of words in English. For example, "back" is written "backe", "cousin" is written "cousine", or "sit" is written "site". Actually, students are applying their knowledge of French to complete these spelling tasks. The word pattern of "back" (CVck) is unfamiliar to them in French so they add the "e" to reflect the more common French word pattern of *hache* (CVche). Adding an "e" to "cousin" reflects a direct transfer of the gender function of "e" in French. Adding an "e" to CVC words indicates that the student does not understand the function of the silent "e" in English, how it changes the pronunciation and meaning of a CVC word.

Initially, it appears that there is no possibility of positive transfer for the silent "e" concept. However, on further study, the gender function of the silent "e" is a positive transfer link from the child's prior knowledge of French to English language learning.

Step 1 – Background

1. Explain to students that today they will learn the job of the silent "e" in English. Even though the silent "e" does not say anything, it has a very important job or purpose.

2. Ask the students if the silent "e" has an important job in French. (Students may answer that the silent "e" indicates gender.)

3. Write the words *vert*, *cousin*, *avocat*, *grand*, *bas* on the board.

4. Ask the students what would happen if you added an "e" to these words.

5. Write the words *verte*, *cousine*, *avocate*, *grande*, and *base* beside their masculine counterpart.
   Note: Knowledge of the French language by the ELA teacher would be helpful here, but not compulsory.

6. Prompt students to indicate where:
   - the "e" changes the gender of the word
   - the "e" does not change the meaning of the word
   - the "e" does not make a sound
   - the "e" makes the final consonant "talk", or to be vocalized.

7. Ask students if they can think of other words in French that follow the same example. Write them on the board.

8. Make a chart outlining the functions of the silent "e" in French.

Step 2 – Language link

1. Tell the students that like French, the "e" has an important job in English. Challenge them to discover what it is and how it is the same as and different from French.

2. Write the words "kit", "cut", "at", "car", and "Sam" on the board.

3. Ask the students what would happen to these words if you added an "e".

4. Write the words "kite", "cute", "ate", "care", and "same" on the board beside the others.

5. Prompt the students to respond that the word changes, the vowel sound is different and the word has a new meaning.

6. Do several more examples on the board.

7. Have students look at the chart listing the functions of silent "e" in French.

8. Compare and contrast.
   - Adding an "e" does not reflect gender in English.
   - Adding an "e" changes the meaning of a CVC word in English but not in French.
   - *Like French, the "e" does not make a sound.
   - *Like French, the "e" makes one of the letters talk. In French, the silent "e" makes the last letter make a sound. In English, the silent "e" makes the vowel in the middle say its name.

9. Summarize by saying that the silent "e" is quiet but important in both languages. When we add it to a word, one of the letters in the word sounds different. In French, the final consonant makes a sound (e.g. *vert – verte*) and in English, the middle vowel says its name (e.g. mat – mate). Unlike French, when we add "e" to a word in English, the meaning of the word changes.

10. To address the specific errors that students make when they apply the silent "e" indiscriminately, write the words "cousine", "backe", "balle" and "Find an ocean on the mape" on the board. Tell students that each word is spelled wrong. Challenge students to find reasons why the "e" does not belong.
    - The "e" in "cousine" does not belong because we do not indicate gender by adding an "e".
    - The "e" in "back" does not belong because the silent "e"s job is to make the vowel say its name. If the vowel does not say its name then the "e" is not necessary.
    - The "e" in "balle" is unnecessary for the same reason as the "e" in "backe". Here you could point out that you drop the "e" on words that transfer from French because the middle vowel does not have to say its name.
    - The "e" in "mape" does not belong because it makes the "a" say its name and that is not the word intended.

Step 3 – Practice

1. Working in groups of 2-3 students, using dictionaries, textbooks, word lists, etc., have students find as many CVC – silent "e" word pairs as they can (e.g. car – care). Write the word pairs from each group on the board.

2. Provide a group of 2-3 students with 10 to 15 sentence strips containing CVC words and a lesser amount of sentence strips with a single "e" written on them. (The number of "e" strips will correspond to the number of CVC words the children are able to build correctly from the CVC word and silent "e".).

Mat	e
Fat	e
Pin	e
Map	
Tip	
Top	
Son	
Car	e
Ton	e
Rip	e
Ran	
Quit	e

Students match the "e" to the proper CVC word to produce a correct silent "e" word. Caution students that even though a word may sound correct, the spelling of the word might not be correct (e.g. tip – tipe). Encourage them to verify spelling in a dictionary.

3. Write silent "e" words on sentence strips. Distribute 10 to 15 sentence strips to groups of 2-3 students.

Same

Have students fold back the "e" to form a CVC word. Students determine whether it is a correct word. Write the words on the board.

4. Students choose between a silent "e" and a CVC word to complete a sentence.
(e.g. The apple is rip – ripe.)

Step 4 – Evaluation

1. Evaluate students' ability to apply their knowledge of the silent "e" by observing their spelling in journals and writing assignments.

2. Hand out a text such as the following.

   My cousine and I wanted to play balle. We pute our capes on our heads and rane outsid as fast as our feet could go. I picked up my favourite bate and glove. Etc.

   Students read the selection and circle the words that are incorrectly spelled. They must correct them by adding or removing an "e".

   The silent "e" should be revisited throughout the transition years.

Spelling Strategy

1. How is the word the same as in French?
2. How is the word different from French?
3. Does the word belong to the same word family as French?
4. Does the word contain an interference?
5. Does the word rhyme with a word you know in English?
6. Break it up!
7. Sound it out!
8. Write it three times!
9. Check!

Proofreading Strategy

My family is fery busi. I ofen make super for my sister.

My dogs nam is Peanut he liks to eat my choes.

When you go at Edmonton do you lik to go at the water parc.

Tell students:

1. You circle all the mistakes then I will correct them for you.
2. I will put an asterisk in the margin for every error. Try to find them.
3. I will put a proofreading code in the margin. You find the mistake and correct.